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### GEN. BENJAMIN H. GRIERSON.

Gen. Benjamin H. Grierson died at his summer home in Omena, Mich., at 10:32 o'clock, Thursday night, September 3, 1911. For more than a year he had been in failing health and after going to Omena he sustained a fall, which served to hasten the end.

By the death of General Grierson there has been removed from the nation one of the most heroic defenders and Illinois has lost a commander, who in point of daring and initiative, was second only to Gen. U. S. Grant. The Grierson raid will be known as long as history lasts and the splendid courage displayed in and leadership of the grand old veteran will live through the ages.

General Grierson's life was remarkable in many respects. He gave of his best service to his country at the time of its greatest need. He was a man of excellent habits and good training and was thus enabled to endure great hardships and to give courage to those under his command. In consequence he was a great leader of men and a commander, whose tactics brought results. Since the death of General Grierson there are now surviving only five out of the 133 that were commissioned to the full rank of major general—General Julius Stahel and General Daniel Sickles of New York, General Greenville Mellen Dodge of Iowa, General James Harrison Wilson of Washington, D. C., and General Peter J. Osterhaus, who is in Germany.

The following facts were gleaned from the biography of General Grierson as written by Dr. W. F. Short in his "History of Morgan County:"

Benjamin H. Grierson was born July 8, 1826, in Pittsburg, Pa., and was a son of Robert and Mary Grierson, natives of Dublin, Ireland. The family emigrated to this

country in 1819, settling at Pittsburg, later removing to Youngstown, Ohio, and thence to Jacksonville, Ill. Benjamin H. pursued a course of study in the high school and academy at Youngstown and passed an examination, which would have entitled him to admission to West Point military academy, but he declined the appointment on account of the opposition of his mother.

During his early years he was engaged in teaching music and still followed this as a profession after coming to Jacksonville in 1851. He possessed musical talent of high order and in early life conducted a noted band and orchestra. Later he spent some five years in the grain and mercantile business at Meredosia until about the beginning of the civil war, when he returned to Jacksonville.

When President Lincoln issued his first call for troops, young Grierson assisted in recruiting Company I of the Tenth regiment, Illinois volunteer infantry, and on May 8, 1861, joined the army at Cairo, serving for three months without pay as aide on the staff of Gen. B. M. Prentiss, serving with nominal rank of lieutenant. He was on duty for a time at Ironton, Mo., and later accompanied Gen. Prentiss on the expedition to Cape Girardeau. Oct. 24, 1861, he was commissioned major of the sixth Illinois cavalry, taking rank from Aug. 28 preceding, but remained on detached service with Gen. Prentiss in northern and central Missouri until November following when he joined his regiment at Shawneetown, Ill.

He was mustered in with his regiment Jan. 9, 1862, and started on Feb. 10, with his battalion under orders from Gen. Sherman to Smithland, Ky. He received orders March 25 to proceed to Pittsburg Landing, but was detained at Paducah by order of Col. Noble the commander. Three days later he was chosen Colonel of the regiment to succeed Col. Cavanaugh, resigned, and in June following was ordered to Memphis, Tenn. On the 19th of that month by a swift dash with 250 men of

his regiment and 50 of the Eleventh cavalry, routed a force of Confederates under Gen. Jeff Thompson at Hernando, Miss., killing and capturing fifteen, besides destroying a large amount of commissary and quartermaster stores, without the loss of a single man.

Under the order of Gen. Grant with a part of his regiment, and the Fifty-eighth Ohio infantry, he moved a week later to Germantown, Tenn., where he was soon joined by the Fifty-second Indiana and a section of artillery, from which point important expeditions were made, which led to securing a large number of colored men to work upon fortifications at Memphis. Returning to Memphis, July 18, he was soon transferred to Gen. Sherman's command, under whose instructions he was actively employed for several months scouting in different directions with uniform success. Mules were obtained, furnishing Gen. Sherman with transportation facilities, enabling him to join Grant's Mississippi expedition. Nov. 26 Col. Grierson left Memphis in advance of Gen. Sherman's corps and for the next fifty days was almost constantly in the saddle, successively under command of Sherman, Grant and McPherson. During this time he made a rapid march from Oxford, Miss., to Helena, Ark., destroying camp equipages, wagons, arms and ammunition, also pursuing Gen. Van Dorn's forces from near Water Valley, Miss., north into Tennessee, and after repulsing that general's attack at Bolivar drove him south of the Tallahatchie.

Col. Grierson was next assigned commander of the First Brigade consisting of the Sixth and Seventh Illinois and Second Iowa cavalry, and by order of Gen. Grant reported to Gen. McPherson, then commanding the Seventeenth army corps, of which the cavalry brigade formed the rear guard on the march to LaGrange, Tenn., where it arrived Jan. 14, 1863. Until April following, the cavalry force was employed in guarding the line of the Memphis & Charleston railroad and scouring the sur-

rounding country. Leaving LaGrange March 8 with 900 men of the Sixth and Seventh Illinois cavalry after a forced march of fifty miles, Col. Grierson attacked the southern forces under Col. Richardson near Covington, Tenn., effecting a complete surprise, routing the enemy with a loss of twenty-two killed and seventy captured, besides the destruction of commissary and quartermaster stores, train, ammunition and military records. Col. Grierson's loss in this expedition was only four men missing.

The colonel had now volunteered for the hazardous undertaking and he entered upon one of the most memorable and brilliant expeditions of the war. On April 17, 1863, under orders received from Gen. Grant, through Generals Hurlbut and Smith, he left LaGrange, Tenn., with 1,700 men with but three days' rations in their haversacks, and marching south through the entire state of Mississippi, a distance of over 600 miles, sixteen days later arrived at Baton Rouge, La. During the last twenty-eight hours of this raid Col. Grierson's force marched seventy-six miles, had four engagements, destroyed two Confederate camps, captured nearly 100 prisoners and crossed Tickfaw, Amite and Comite rivers.

The destruction of sixty miles of railroad and telegraph line, several million dollars in property, besides 100 soldiers killed or wounded and 500 captured and paroled, was the result of this famous expedition. A large number of colored men accompanied Grierson's force to Baton Rouge and immediately mustered into union regiments. Colonel Grierson's entire loss amounted to one officer, one non-commissioned officer and three privates wounded and nine missing.

The expedition proved the confederacy a "mere shell," disconcerted the enemy's plans, scattered and drew their forces from vulnerable points and threw them into such confusion as to render them unserviceable and unable to concentrate against General Grant's forces in the move-

ment against Vicksburg. As a consequence over 20,000 southern troops were ordered to different points by Generals Pemberton and Gardner, depleting the strength of the confederate forces at Vicksburg in the vain attempt to capture and destroy Colonel Grierson and his gallant band of audacious raiders from Illinois and proving an important factor in the capture of that southern stronghold three months later. On May 12 following, Grierson's command destroyed the railroads and telegraph between Clinton and Port Hudson, La., took part in a number of engagements and patrolled the region in the vicinity of Port Hudson until its surrender.

As a recognition of the services rendered in this remarkable campaign President Lincoln promoted Colonel Grierson to Brigadier General of Volunteers "for gallant and distinguished service" in his great raid through the heart of the so-called confederacy—his commission bearing date June 3, 1863, one month before the fall of Vicksburg.

General Grierson took an active part in all expeditions from western Tennessee into Mississippi in 1864, made with a view of attracting the attention of the rebel forces and drawing their cavalry from the front and flank of the main army under command of General Sherman during the operations of the latter in middle Tennessee, and especially while General Sherman was concentrating his forces for his famous "march through Georgia." By direction of General Halleck, General Grierson led a rapid and successful cavalry expedition from Memphis, Tenn., in mid-winter—December, 1864, and January, 1865—dealing a destructive blow to the enemy's communications with the south, by destroying railroads, capturing and destroying Hood's army supplies, including ordnance, commissary, medical and quartermaster stores at Verona, Miss., and capturing the rebel fortification and forces at Egypt Station, Miss.

Referring to the famous raid of 1863, General Grant stated in writing, now on file in the war department,

“General Grierson was the first officer to set the example of what might be done in the interior of the enemy’s country without a base from which to draw supplies, and that the mid-winter raid of 1864-65 was most important in its results and most successfully executed.”

It is impossible within the limits of this sketch to give a detailed account of even the most important of General Grierson’s military achievements during the war period. Suffice to say that, up to the hour of the suppression of the rebellion, he was engaged in a service calling for gallantry, military skill and able leadership and was not found wanting, as shown in the reputation conceded to him in the history of that dramatic period.

On February 10, 1865, by direction of President Lincoln, he was assigned to duty with the brevet rank of major-general and ordered to report to General Canby at New Orleans, to take command of a cavalry expedition through Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi. Returning to New Orleans he organized a cavalry force for service in Texas, and later was in command in northern Alabama with headquarters at Huntsville, where he remained until January 1866, soon after being summoned to Washington to testify before the congressional committee on reconstruction. While there he was promoted to major-general of volunteers to rank from May 27, 1865, “for gallant and meritorious service during the war of the rebellion.” At his own request he was honorably mustered out of the volunteer service, April 30, 1866.

On the reorganization of the regular army, General Grierson was appointed colonel of the Tenth Regiment U. S. Cavalry, soon thereafter receiving the brevets of brigadier and major-general U. S. army. He organized his regiment at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., and for nearly a quarter of a century was actively engaged in scouting and exploring throughout the western states and territories, being almost constantly in the field or at some exposed post in the midst of the most savage and warlike

Indians of the frontiers. In this way he rendered service to the government quite as hazardous and important as that rendered during the war of the rebellion. Besides this valuable service at various military posts, he commanded at different times the districts of the Indian Territory and Pecos, Texas; The Department of Texas; the district of New Mexico and the department of Arizona, with headquarters at Los Angeles, Cal., where he received his appointment as brigadier-general U. S. army, to rank from April 3, 1890. He was retired from active service on July 8 of the same year, since when he has resided at Jacksonville, Ill.

On Sept. 24, 1854, General Grierson was united in marriage to Alice Kirk, of Youngstown, Ohio, daughter of John and Susan (Bingham) Kirk. She died Aug. 16, 1888. Seven children were born to this union, of whom two daughters and one son are deceased. The surviving sons are as follows; Col. Charles H. Grierson, U. S. A., a graduate of West Point, now at Fort Ethan Allen, Vt.; Robert K., of Jacksonville, Ill.; Benjamin H., Jr., and George M., who are at Fort Davis, Texas, in the ranch business. On July 28, 1897, he was wedded to Mrs. Lillian King widow of Col. John W. King and a daughter of Moses G. Atwood of Alton, Ill., who moved from Concord, N. H., in 1837. Mrs. Grierson has one son, Harold Atwood King, general manager of a ranch belonging to General Grierson at Fort Davis, Texas.

In politics General Grierson was a Republican. Immediately on the organization of that party he became actively allied with it, earnestly advocating the election of John C. Fremont for the presidency, and in the campaign of 1856 was one of the very few supporters of Fremont in Meredosia, Morgan county, Ill.